

Mr. H. MUNT had been chosen to audit the accounts of the Club, in the place of Mr. D. Seth-Smith.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the first Discussion of the next Session would take place at the November Meeting on:—

“The Bearing of Oology on Systematic Ornithology.”

Opened by the Rev. F. C. R. JOURDAIN, M.A.

Opposed by Dr. E. HARTERT.

The Rev. F. C. R. JOURDAIN exhibited a nest of the Serin Finch (*Serinus canarius serinus*) taken at Vejer de la Frontera, Spain, on May 8, 1915, in which a row of black feathers projected perpendicularly upward from the interior of the nest to a height of over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, thus forming a screen which effectually concealed the sitting-bird. No other Serin's nest examined by the speaker showed any sign of this unusual construction.

Mr. JOURDAIN also read a letter from Mr. H. M. Upcher to Mr. Witherby, in which he stated that a friend had twice seen a Cuckoo lay its egg on the grass and place it in a Wagtail's nest by means of its bill. It was generally agreed that this method is frequently adopted by the Cuckoo, and that in the case of such species as the Willow-Wren, Wren, Goldcrest, Tit-mice, etc., no other process would be possible.

Dr. VAN SOMEREN sent for exhibition six new birds from Uganda, which he proposed to name

*Turdinus ugandæ*, sp. n.

*Adult male.* Most nearly allied to *T. fulvescens* of Cassin and of Bates ('Ibis,' 1907), but differs in having the throat pure white, not sharply differentiated, but merging gradually into the grey on the side of the head and the olive-brown of the breast. In *T. fulvescens* the throat is grey with distinct

dusky shaft-streaks. In *T. ugandæ* the underparts are paler and less brownish than in either *T. fulvescens* or *T. reichenowi*.

*Hab.* Uganda Forests.

Types in the Tring Museum: ♂ ad., Sezibwa River Forest, 16. xi. 14; ♀ ad., Mabira Forest, 30. iv. 14. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Obs.* It may be pointed out that the bird referred to above as *T. fulvescens* is the species which, until Bates drew attention to it ('Ibis,' 1907), was known as *T. cerviniventris*. These birds have long tails. The pale-breasted bird, which has been erroneously recognised as *T. fulvescens*, must now be called *T. rufipennis* of Sharpe, the type of which is in the British Museum. I am convinced that the Uganda birds, which are *very* similar to *T. rufipennis*, are really quite distinct, and that *T. barakæ* Jackson should be recognised as a subspecies.

*Turdinus albipectus minutus*, subsp. n.

*Adult male.* Very similar to *T. albipectus* Reich., but very much smaller, with the back not so rust-coloured and the middle of the under-side of a less pure white colour. Wing 65 mm.

*Hab.* Mabira Forest, Uganda.

Type in the Tring Museum: ♂ ad. Mabira Forest, 2. x. 13. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Macrosphenus flavicans ugandæ*, subsp. n.

*Adult male.* Very similar to *M. f. flavicans*, but darker, richer yellow on the under-side. Wing 63 mm.

*Hab.* Uganda Forests.

Type in the Tring Museum: ♂ ad. Mabira, 14. i. 14. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Obs.* A dozen specimens were collected; all show the distinguishing characters. The specimens of this bird collected by the Ruwenzori Expedition were referred to *M. f. flavicans*.

*Chlorocichla gracilirostris chagwensis*, subsp. n.

*Adult male.* Very like *C. g. gracilirostris*, but greyer on the under-side with an olive wash; the throat greyish, not white or yellowish, and slightly brighter green above. Under wing-coverts much brighter yellow. Wing, ♂ 83-87 mm., ♀ 78-83.

*Hab.* Uganda Forests.

Type in the Tring Museum: ♂ ad. Nazigo Hill, Chagwe Province, 20. x. 14. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Obs.* The range of this subspecies meets with that of *C. gracilirostris percivali* Neum. on the borders of Mt. Elgon. Eighteen specimens were obtained.

*Andropadus ugandæ*, sp. n.

*Adult male.* Intermediate between *A. gracilis* and *A. minor*, but differs from both in having the throat and breast greyish, the upper-side more olive, the tail more rust-coloured, and the upper and lower eyelids white. Wing 65-70 mm.; bill (from nostril) 7; tail 70; tarsus 15.

*Hab.* Kasala and Mabira Forests, Uganda, east to Mount Elgon.

Types in the Tring Museum: ♂ ad., 20. iv. 14; ♀ ad., 7. ii. 14. Mabira Forest. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Obs.* A large series was procured. Much confusion exists in connection with these forest Bulbuls; I have taken the opportunity of looking over the series in the British and Tring Museums before coming to a definite conclusion regarding the bird just described.

*Chlorocichla indicator chlorosaturata*, subsp. n.

*Adult male.* Very similar to *C. i. indicator*, but more greenish-olive above and very much darker grey below, each feather on the under-side being dark grey edged laterally with olive-green, middle of the abdomen darker ochraceous.

Wing, ♂ 102-107 mm., ♀ 99-102.

*Hab.* Uganda Forests.

Type in the Tring Museum: ♂ ♀ ad. Kyetume Forest, 7. xii. 14. Dr. van Someren coll.

*Obs.* Before naming this bird I have examined all the members of this group in the British and Tring Museums. The characters of this subspecies are found to be constant.

The remainder of the evening was devoted to a Discussion on

“The Effect of Environment on the Evolution of Species.”

The CHAIRMAN\* : It is much less easy, at the present day, to discuss Environment and its influence on Evolution than it was a few years ago, owing to the experiments carried out in connection with the study of the “Mendelian Law.” This study and the experiments connected with it have led many biologists to the conviction that all variation is fortuitous, and that the fixity of certain types and the continuance of evolution are entirely due to the action of the Mendelian Law. It would take much longer than the time at my disposal to discuss adequately these experiments, or to explain why the exponents of “Mendelism” have, in many instances, come to the conclusions which they expound. In this discussion I propose to follow the lines of reasoning which have led to my personal conclusions, and to leave it to others to prove or disprove these conclusions as well as they are able. It is my opinion that climatic and other local conditions start the variation, and that the Darwinian law of the survival of the fittest directs and maintains this variation, but that the Mendelian law, by hastening the process of evolution in the direction in which it began, finally completes the process. Many obstacles appear in the path of the student, for it is, at this late stage in biological evolution, often impossible to trace the lines on which it has taken place, and therefore very difficult to determine which factors in environment have acted in a given case.

\* A list of the specimens exhibited by Lord Rothschild to illustrate his address is given on pp. 140-142.